

State of Louisiana Accepting Comments on Plan to Use Hurricane Isaac Recovery Funds

Aug. 16, 2013

BATON ROUGE - The State of Louisiana is accepting public comments on an Action Plan that allocates disaster recovery Community Development Block grant funds for recovery from Hurricane Isaac, which struck Louisiana's coast on Aug. 28, 2012 as a Category 1 hurricane.

On May 29, 2013, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, under the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013, appropriated \$106,778,000 to Louisiana for recovery from Hurricane Isaac. Of that, HUD allocated \$40,380,000 directly to the City of New Orleans, Jefferson Parish and St. Tammany Parish.

The remaining \$66,398,000 is allocated to the State of Louisiana, but the state intends to transfer \$2,019,000 to St. Tammany Parish to be managed as part of their direct allocation, reducing the state's total grant to \$64,379,000.

The Action Plan describes the damage caused to the state and specifically St. John the Baptist and Plaquemines parishes, which were designated by HUD as the "most impacted and distressed parishes". It details the unmet needs caused by Hurricane Isaac and outlines proposed uses of funds and eligible activities available to assist declared parishes to meet unmet housing, economic development, public service, infrastructure and other needs that arose as a result of the storm.

"We've been in communication with the parish leaders in St. John the Baptist and Plaquemines since the storm hit last year, working with them and the other impacted parishes around the state to help them understand the impacts and establish their priorities for recovery," said Pat Forbes, executive director of the Louisiana Office of Community Development. "We will continue to assist them as they develop and implement the recovery plans for their specific parish needs."

The Office of Community Development - Disaster Recovery Unit proposes to allocate \$32,674,000 to St. John the Baptist Parish and \$16,953,000 to Plaquemines Parish for their recovery needs, while using \$11,432,000 for state-implemented programs to address unmet needs in other impacted areas and \$3,320,000 for state administration, planning and program delivery.

"The remaining \$11,432,000 will be invested to address unmet recovery needs at the state and local levels," noted Forbes.

This initial Action Plan requests from HUD an obligation of \$784,000 in state and parish administration fees; future partial action plans will obligate the remaining funds to specific programs and activities and will be submitted for public comment.

Public Comments

Beginning today, the state is accepting public comments on the Action Plan, which can be found at http://doa.louisiana.gov/cdbg/dr/plans/Isaac/IsaacAP_PubComment_2013-08-16.pdf.

The formal public comment period for the plan begins today, Aug. 16, 2013, and runs until 5 p.m. Friday, Aug. 23. After accepting public comments, the state will submit the plan to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for final federal approval.

Citizens, community leaders and elected officials can access the plans and submit comments online by visiting http://www.doa.louisiana.gov/cdbg/DR/IC_ActionPlans.htm and opening the Isaac Action Plan. A copy of the plan can be requested by calling (225) 219-9600.

Members of the public can submit comments several ways:

- Using the online form at http://www.doa.louisiana.gov/cdbg/DR/IC_ActionPlans.htm;
- Emailing them to ocd@la.gov;
- Mailing them to Disaster Recovery Unit, P.O. Box 94095, 70804-9095, Attn: Janice Lovett; or
- Faxing them to the attention of Janice Lovett at (225) 219-9605.

The Disaster Recovery Unit within the Office of Community Development is dedicated to helping Louisiana's citizens recover from hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav, Ike and Isaac. As the state's central point for hurricane recovery, the OCD-DRU manages the most extensive rebuilding effort in American history, working closely with local, state and federal partners to ensure that Louisiana recovers safer, stronger and smarter than before.

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